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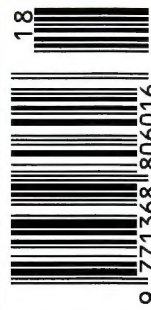
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THE SPINECHILLER Collection

18



Reading's never been so
SCARY!



Malta: Eagle
Amberley
1995

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FREE IN
ISSUE 19
Spooky
Pop-up



Next week in

THE
SPINECHILLER
Collection

SUPER SCARY STORY
Slime Mutants

OUR HAUNTED WORLD
Mexico
A Furry Friend

STRANGE BUT TRUE
Kaspar Hauser

CLASSIC SERIAL
Madam Crowl's Ghost:
Chapter 1

PUZZLES
Frankenstein's Monster

THE UNEXPLAINED
Psychokinesis

Ricky's Rocket



Ricky Ormsby had been riding the same bike since primary school. Low-slung with high, U-shaped handle bars, the bike had been hopelessly out of date when his parents bought it in a sale five years ago. Now it was an embarrassment.

"I need a new bike," Ricky told his mother one day.

"Really? What's wrong with the one you've already got?" his mother asked.

"It's too small," Ricky insisted. "It only has one speed. And it's old fashioned. At school they make fun of me. They say my bike is for nerds."

"Are you a nerd?" his mother asked calmly.

"No way!" Ricky cried.

"Then I suppose your friends must be wrong," his mother concluded, patting him on the back.

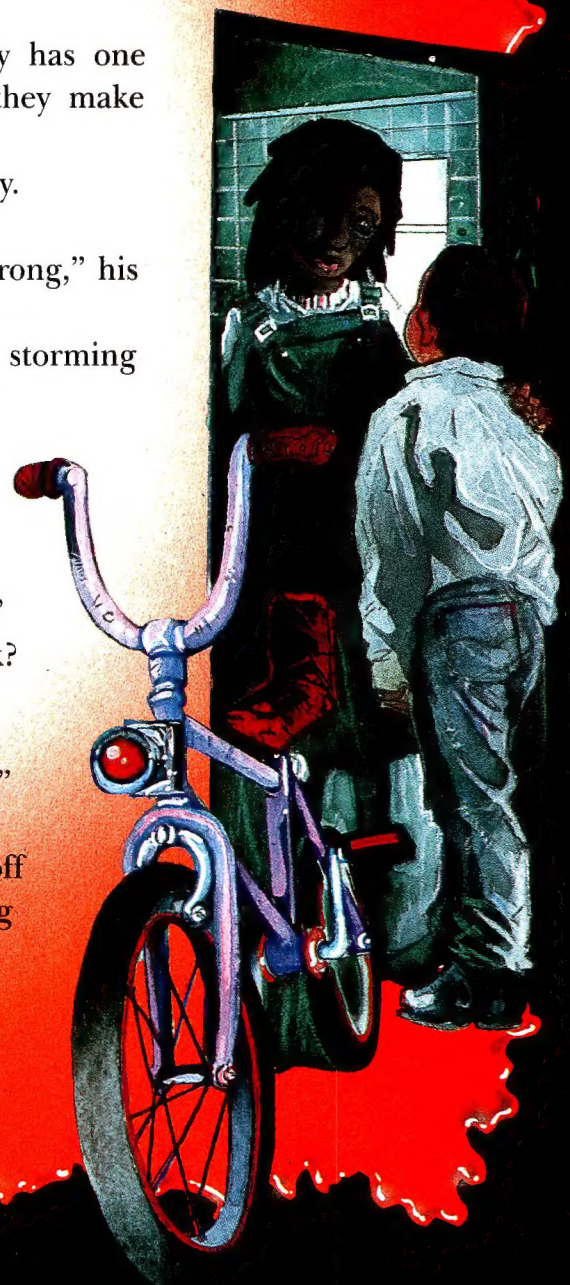
Frustrated, Ricky turned away and was storming out of the kitchen when his mother picked up the local paper.

"They're having a car boot sale over at the Wiltshire Estate this weekend," she said, referring to a well-to-do area about half a mile from the Ormsbys' home. "Why don't we go and have a look? Maybe we'll be able to find you a bike."

"Really?" Ricky perked up.

"Assuming the price is right, of course," his mother replied.

"Cool!" Ricky exclaimed, then headed off on his old bike to imagine himself hurtling about on a gleaming new 21-speed trail bike, with straight handlebars and a proper seat.



That Saturday, Ricky and his mother drove over to the Wiltshire Estate. For the next two hours they sifted through other people's unwanted belongings.

For a while it looked as though their quest was hopeless. Although Ricky's mum found a used camera and some records she couldn't resist, Ricky found his choice of bicycles to be painfully lean. Most of the bikes he saw were ancient, rusty artefacts that looked like they'd been gathering dust for the past millennium. Ricky was about to give up when he found a Galaxy Rocket road bike for the incredibly low price of £50, for sale at the house at the end of Juniper Street.



The bicycle was painted in an ultra-cool electric blue and appeared to be in perfect condition. Ricky knew that in the shops a bike like this would sell for around £300. Getting one for £50 wasn't just a bargain, it was a steal!

"Mum, I just have to have this bike!" Ricky insisted, dragging his mother over to it. The bike sat among a collection of boys' clothes and furniture. "You're never going to find a bike this good for a price this low. Please!"

His mother thought for a moment or two, then reached into her bag. "All right," she said. "I just hope you're happy with it."

"Mum, believe me," Ricky assured her. "You won't regret it."



Great bike!" remarked Matthew York as Ricky pulled up in front of his school. "Is that yours?"

"All mine," Ricky replied proudly as he jumped off his new bike and chained it up to the railings. "I got it at a boot sale for fifty quid."

"Fifty quid? No way!" Matthew exclaimed. "That's a two-hundred quid bike you've got there!"

"Three hundred," Ricky corrected him. "But we got it second-hand."

"Wow, you are so lucky!" Matthew said, admiring the gleaming frame and padded handlebars. "They were practically giving it away."

"I guess some of us just lead charmed lives," Ricky said as he and Matthew went in.

The day passed quickly for Ricky, and at 3:30 that afternoon he was back on his new bicycle. The sky was clear and the air was warm, and Ricky was feeling so good that he decided to take the long way home down Pine Avenue.

Coasting smoothly past a parade of shops, Ricky was approaching the traffic lights at Prospect Street when his front wheel suddenly jerked to the left. At first, he thought that he'd hit a pothole, and quickly recovered his balance. But seconds later, the bike jerked again, and

this time Ricky couldn't straighten it out, no matter how hard he tried.

Terrified, he found himself careering into the middle of the busy road. Horns honked angrily and brakes squealed as cars and buses stopped to avoid him.

Certain he was about to crash, Ricky squeezed his brakes as hard as he could. But the bike didn't even slow down. As angry drivers shouted at him, Ricky spun around until he was facing back in the direction from which he'd come. Then the Rocket began to accelerate, picking up speed even though Ricky was holding the pedals firmly in place.

"Help!" Ricky screamed in terror as the Rocket raced down Pine Avenue. "I can't stop!"

Desperate to regain control, Ricky tried to brake with his feet. But his shoes didn't even come close to touching the tarmac. Next he tried steering into the kerb, but no matter how much force he exerted on the handlebars, the bike refused to budge. It was as if the Rocket had a mind of its own.

After speeding past a stop sign, the wayward bike now carried Ricky past one more turning, then turned right on to Elm Way. Then it positioned itself directly behind a large, black saloon car, which had made the same turn just a few moments before.

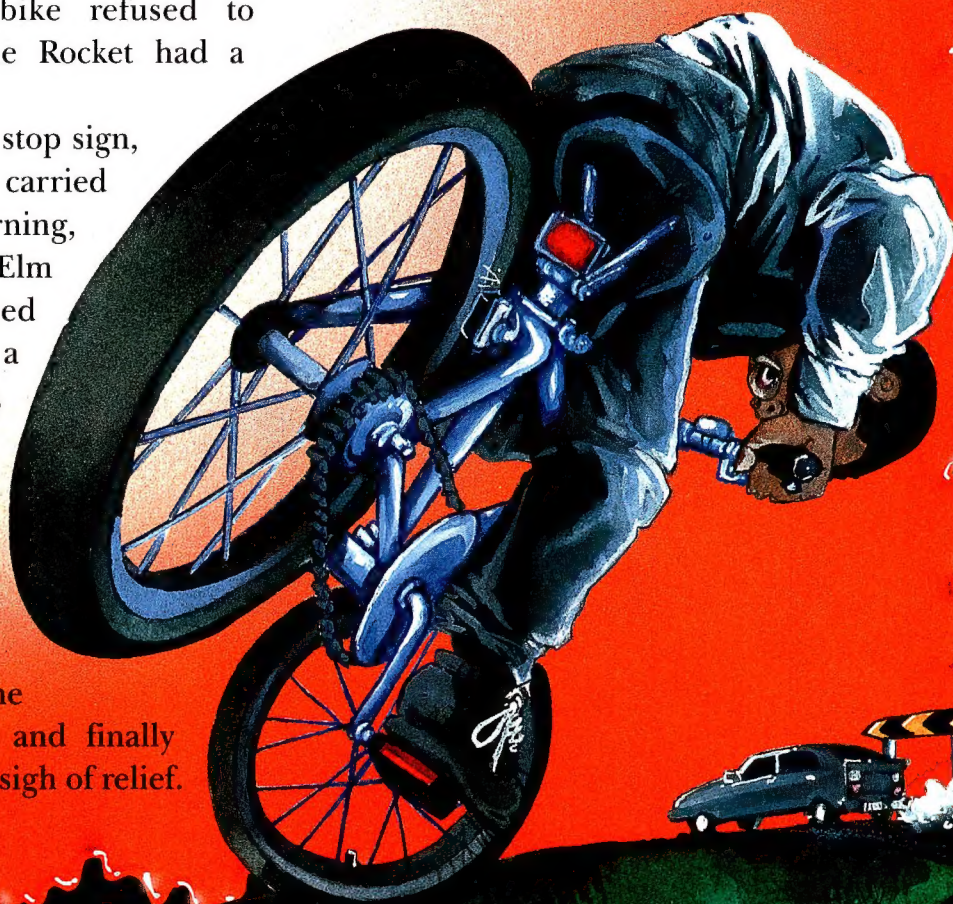
At the next block, the saloon slowed down and paused briefly at a stop sign. Amazingly, the Rocket slowed as well, and finally stopped. Ricky heaved a sigh of relief.

It's finally over! he thought thankfully. I hope that never happens again!

However, as soon as the black saloon resumed its course, his bike leaped back into motion, carrying Ricky with it. Slowly, it dawned on Ricky that, powered by forces he could never imagine, the Rocket appeared determined to follow this car wherever it went. But why, Ricky wondered, holding on for dear life. And how long was he expected to stay on?

Fifteen minutes later, the mysterious black saloon was accelerating on to a three-lane motorway. Terrified, Ricky had no choice but to jump off.

Steeling himself as the crazed bike approached the slip-road, Ricky threw his leg over the bar, then launched himself towards the grass verge. He landed with a painful thump, and rolled several times before finally coming to a halt. At the same time, the Rocket came crashing to a stop beside him.



Ricky slowly got to his feet, brushed himself off, and went to inspect his seemingly possessed bicycle. As far as he could see, the crash had not caused any serious damage to the machine. Almost afraid to touch the Rocket for fear that it would again jump into life, Ricky gently grabbed hold of the metal frame and carefully set the bicycle upright. Then, he cautiously sat on the seat and pulled the handlebars back and forth. The front wheel moved freely. There was no resistance from the bike, no attempt to go speeding off. Apparently, whatever force had taken control of the Rocket had left as quickly as it had come. As for Ricky, he hoped it would never return and that by the time he got home he'd come up with a good explanation for why he was so late.



Wow, that is so weird," Matthew gasped the next morning when Ricky told him. "At least now you know why the original owners let it go so cheap."

"What do you mean?" Ricky asked, not sure what his friend was suggesting.

"Obviously, the bike is haunted," Matthew explained. "It probably contains the ghost of its original owner. Or maybe it's haunted by some guy who got killed when it was made."

"That's ridiculous," Ricky scoffed. "There's no such thing as ghosts, or haunted bicycles!"

"So how do you explain it?" Matthew demanded. "Bikes don't usually go around

chasing after cars all on their own."

Ricky had to admit that he had a point. Chances are, his bike was haunted. That left him with two choices. Either he could sell the bike to someone else, or he could try to find a way to rid the machine of its spectral guest. Since he loved the Rocket more than anything, and since the chances of getting another one like it for £50 were slim to none, he decided that getting rid of the spirit was his only option. But how? He decided to start at the beginning, the house at the end of Juniper Street.



Yes? Can I help you?" the woman at the front door asked. Ricky remembered her sad eyes from the previous weekend.

"My name's Ricky Ormsby," Ricky said. "I don't know if you remember me, but my mum bought that bike from you last weekend."

The woman looked over at the electric blue Rocket. Immediately, Ricky could see her facial muscles tighten and heard her breath catch in her throat.

"Is there something wrong?" the woman asked, quickly regaining control.

"Don't you like it?"

"It's great," Ricky said, having



decided that accusing her of selling him a haunted bicycle was probably not the best way to begin. "I was just wondering if you could tell me who it belonged to originally."

The woman hesitated, then cast her sad eyes downward.

"It belonged to my son, David," she replied, her voice shaky. "He died last year."

"I'm sorry," Ricky said, suddenly feeling very awkward. But he had to get to the bottom of this mystery. "I don't mean to be nosy, but can you tell me how he died?"

Again, the woman paused, her eyes blank as her thoughts drifted into the past. "He was run off the road," she finally replied. "He was riding his bike, that bike, along Valley Road when someone forced him off the edge. He fell into the valley and was killed instantly. The bike was barely scratched. At first, my husband and I couldn't bear to part with anything that belonged to him. But finally we

decided it was time to move on. That's why we had the sale, to sell off David's things."

Ricky thought back to the previous weekend. He remembered the clothes and other things for sale. It must have been everything from David's bedroom. "Why did you want to know about David?" the woman inquired.

"I, um, was just curious," Ricky replied with a shrug. Then he added, "By the way, did they ever find out who forced David off the road?"

"No, they didn't," the woman said, her voice tinged with anger. "The police believe it was a drunk driver. He probably never even saw David on his bike, or knew what he had done."

Ricky thanked her and set off for home. He now thought he understood exactly what was going on. Just like some spirits haunt the houses in which they died, David's ghost was inside the bicycle on which he was killed. He had a mission to find the person who had killed him and bring him to justice. Ricky realised that he had been recruited to help in this mission.



he next week, for two hours each day after school, Ricky rode his Rocket up and down Pine Avenue hoping to meet the black saloon.

But as days passed without even the slightest sign of life from the machine, Ricky began to think that either the car would never show up, or David's ghost had already abandoned the bike.

And then, on his tenth attempt,



Ricky's luck changed. He was cruising up Pine Avenue when he felt the Rocket pick up speed.

It's happening again! Ricky thought, his mind filled with excitement and fear. The bike is alive!

Holding tight, he crouched low over the handlebars as the bicycle got faster. It shot through the next crossroads, zig-zagged past several slower cars, then whipped on to Wilmington Avenue.

Immediately, Ricky saw the black car dead ahead. The first thing he did was to look at its number-plate. He'd even brought a pencil and pad of paper with him to write it down. But he was now going so fast, nearly thirty miles an hour, that he didn't dare let go to fish them out of his pocket.

"T901GGO," he said aloud. He repeated the number over and over to himself, committing it to memory.

The car soon turned on to Valley Road, with the Rocket right behind it. Soon, both vehicles were speeding along the narrow, twisting asphalt ribbon, to the right of them a sheer cliff face, on the left a low wall that dropped away into oblivion.

This is where it happened! Ricky thought in terror as he glanced over at the cliff below him. This is the stretch of road where David was killed!

As if confirming Ricky's suspicions, the Rocket began to vibrate angrily and its speed increased even further. Ricky hung on for dear life as he sped towards the back of the black saloon. He shut his eyes as thump! his front wheel slammed into the saloon's rear bumper. The bike slowed for a moment, then sped up again, striking the car a second time.

"Stop it!" Ricky screamed at the top of his

voice. "You're going to get me killed too!"

Apparently, the saloon's driver had finally noticed Ricky, for the car drifted towards the middle of the road, giving him a little more room on the right. But instead of taking this route, which would have put the frightened boy between the car and the cliff, the bike went to the left, speeding up until Ricky found himself level with the driver's window.

His heart racing even faster than the bike, Ricky glanced to his right to see if he could identify the driver. But what he saw made his blood run cold. There was no one there!

Before he had a chance to react, the Rocket veered to the right, slamming itself into the side of the car. The car, also acting on its own, veered left, forcing Ricky towards the edge.

"Stop it!" Ricky screamed again, uncertain if he was now talking to David's ghost or the ghostly car with which he was now locked in deadly combat. "Please! I want to go home!"

Ignoring his pleas, the Rocket again slammed itself into the side of the driverless car. This time, the car drifted towards the cliff, then roared back towards Ricky, determined to kill him.

At that instant, the bike's brakes slammed on. Sweating buckets, Ricky clung on desperately as he skidded wildly across the tarmac. At the same time, the car shot straight in front of him, and slid into the on-coming lane. Ricky heard the sound of a blaring horn. WHAM! The killer car collided



head-on with a huge artic that had just rounded the corner.

There was a sickening explosion as the driverless car was sent flying over the cliff by the impact. Jagged metal remnants came flying directly over Ricky's head.

It took nearly ten seconds for the lorry to judder to a halt. Jumping down from the cab, the driver ran over to the cliffside where Ricky joined him, and they gazed down at the burning remains of the murderous car.

"Madman!" the lorry driver bellowed. "He just ploughed right into me! You saw it, didn't you, lad?"

"Yup, I saw the whole thing," Ricky replied, calmly.

"I'll call the cops," the lorry driver

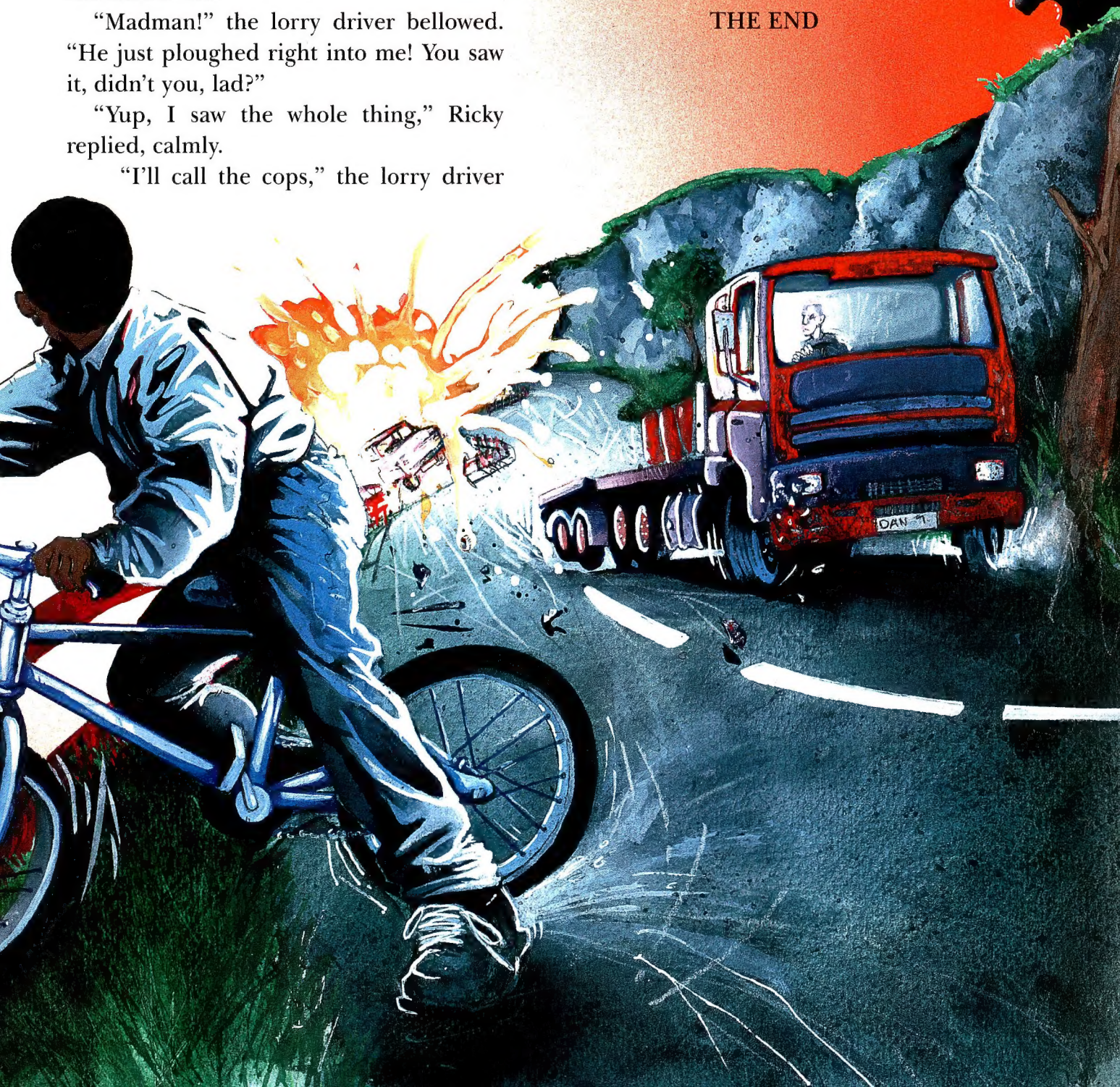
said, running back to his vehicle.

As the lorry driver made his call, Ricky climbed back on to his Rocket. Everything seemed to be working fine. Then, smiling with the knowledge that he had rid the world of an evil ghost driver, Ricky turned and pedalled for home.

As he did, the bicycle bell rang twice then fell silent.

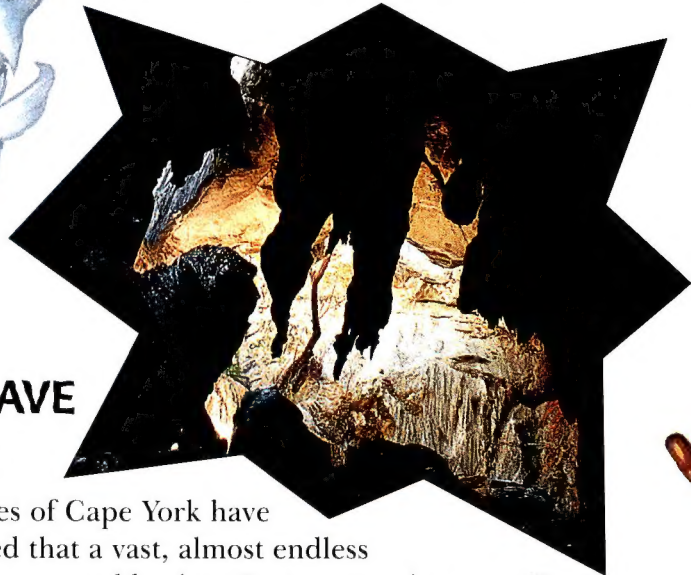
Ricky rang the bell back. "So long, David," he murmured. "Rest in peace."

THE END



OUR HAUNTED WORLD

Time for a look at some grisly goings-on in Queensland, Australia...



LOST CAVE WORLD

The Aborigines of Cape York have always believed that a vast, almost endless underground cave-world exists. Dangerous, giant manlike creatures and enormous reptiles are said to live there. Even speleologists (cave experts) say that they often hear the haunting cries and wails of large, mysterious creatures echoing through the cave systems. Many people enter the caves never to return, so perhaps it's not surprising that Aborigines often refuse to tell explorers where the secret entrances are.



The Beast of Brisbane

In the 1820s, Captain Patrick Logan was commandant of the infamous Moreton Bay prison colony. Half-starved convicts worked in chains, were flogged daily with the cat-o'-nine-tails and even killed. Logan was also cruel to the local Aborigines and when they killed him, his death was celebrated. Ghostly tales began the very day Logan died. It's said that he was seen, on horseback, on the far side of the Brisbane River but when the ferryman went to fetch him, no one was there!





WOWEE, IT'S A YOWIE!

Australia's mysterious, Bigfoot-like creature is called a yowie. This drawing (left) was based on a 1912 sighting in Bambala, New South Wales. Reports of similar creatures are often heard and it could have been a yowie that terrified a wildlife ranger in Queensland National Park in 1978. The ranger said it was a massive 2.25 metres tall, with dark hair, flat shiny face, big yellow eyes and a short, thick neck. When the yowie realised it had been spotted, it let out a smell so foul that it made the ranger throw up. The creature made a swift getaway. The queasy ranger – who used to think of the yowie as strictly 'comic-book stuff' – was now horribly certain of its reality!

THE BOOYA STONES

Stories about the sacred booya stones of the Murray Islands, off Cape York, fascinated Australian travel writer Ion Idriess. He discovered that the stones had been handed down through countless generations by the islands' priests. Said to give out an intense blue light, if a booya stone was placed in a special holder, the light could be focussed into a beam, like a ray gun. Any human zapped by the beam would light up, just like an X-ray, then die soon after! When the Europeans arrived in Australia, the priests hid the powerful booya stones. Today, no one knows or will reveal their hiding place, so the source of the booya stones' power may forever remain a mystery.

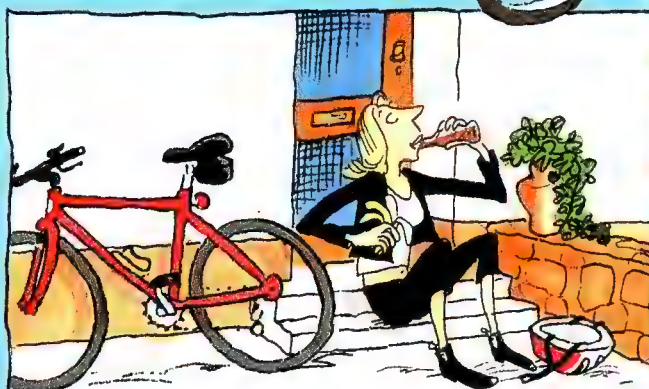
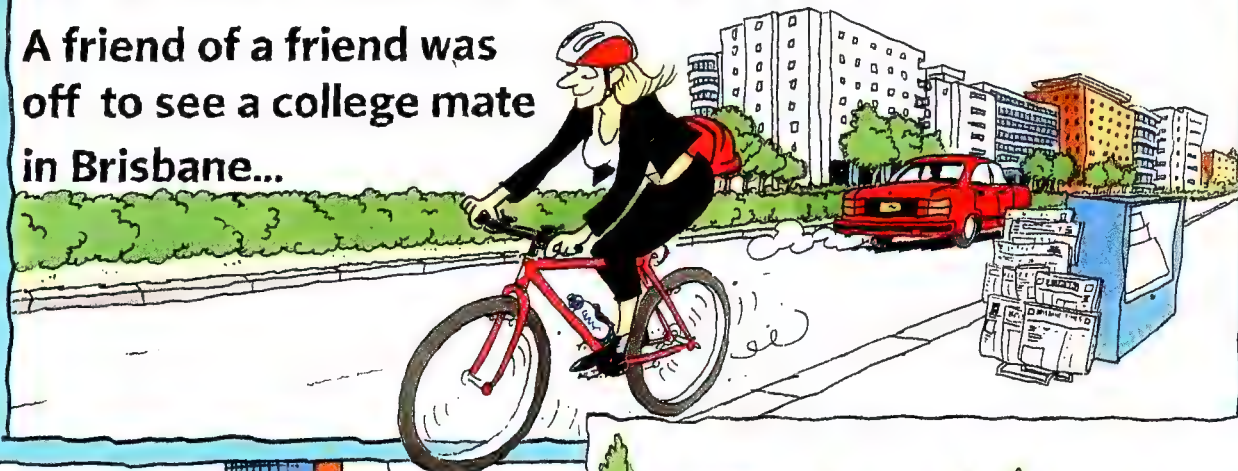
Sea Monster Snapped!

In 1964, Robert le Serrec filmed this amazing sea monster in the shallow waters off Hook Island. It was at least 20 metres long, with what looked like a gaping wound in its side. When the monster raised its gigantic head out of the water, Robert stopped filming and raced away in a big hurry! Experts say the creature looks like a monstrous swamp-eel but whatever it was, Robert felt he'd been lucky to survive his close encounter!



DEAD GOOD NEWS

A friend of a friend was off to see a college mate in Brisbane...



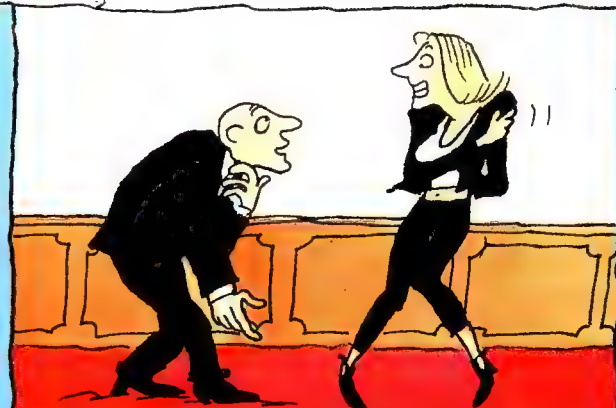
1 When she arrived after a long cycle ride, the friend wasn't home yet. The girl waited on the doorstep and drank some cola.



2 She soon realised that she needed to use a loo. As she hurried along the residential road to find one, she realised that there were no shops!

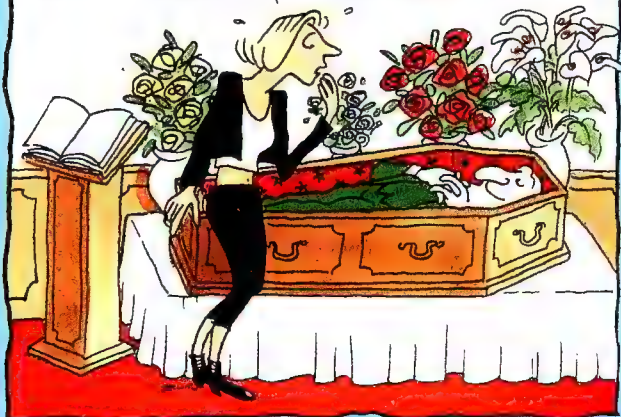


3 She was beginning to feel desperate when she spotted a funeral parlour. They'd be bound to have a loo she could use.

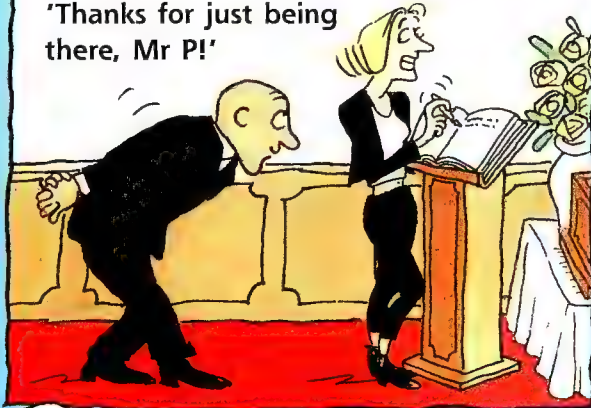


4 The funeral director greeted her and asked if she was here for Mr Bruce Protheroe. The girl mumbled that she was, then asked for the ladies' room.

5 When she came out (much relieved) she was guided to the open coffin of the unknown Mr Protheroe, where she was left alone in the room with him.



6 Next to the coffin was an empty 'In Memoriam' book. She wrote her name and address, as requested. Then she added, quite truthfully, 'Thanks for just being there, Mr P!'



8 The lonely Mr P had left clear instructions that his \$500,000 savings should be divided up between all of the people who came to pay him their last respects.

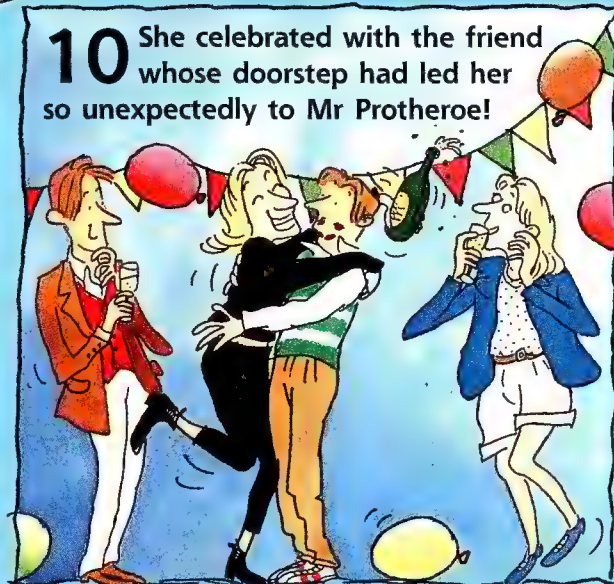
7 Three weeks later, the girl had a phone call from the solicitor dealing with Mr Bruce Protheroe's last will and testament. She had some amazing news.



9 And, as the girl had been the only person to show up, the entire fortune was legally hers!



10 She celebrated with the friend whose doorstep had led her so unexpectedly to Mr Protheroe!





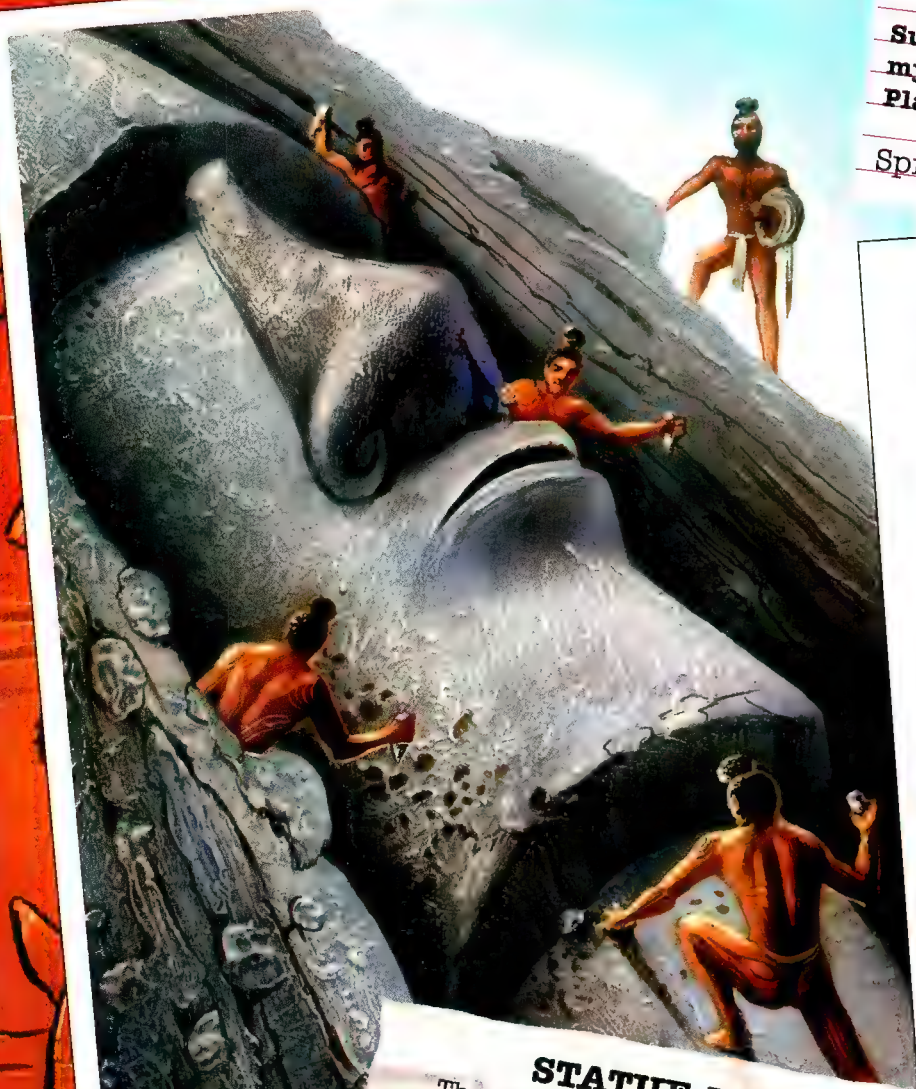
EASTER ISLAND

Special Investigation File: 18

Subject: an island covered in mysterious stone statues

Place: Pacific Ocean

SpineChiller creates a file



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Easter Island lies far out in the Pacific Ocean. People first arrived there by canoe about 1500 years ago. Six hundred years later, the island had a thriving population of 10,000 inhabitants who honoured their ancestors by carving huge statues of them. They proudly displayed these statues on platforms known as 'ahu'.

In the 16th century war broke out on the island. And when Dutchman Jacob Roggeveen became the first European to land there, in 1722, the population was only about 2000.

By the time English explorer Captain James Cook arrived in 1774, many of the massive statues had been smashed.

STATUE FACTS

The Easter Islanders built about 800 statues, known as 'moai'. Most were legless human figures between two and ten metres tall, with huge heads. Some had eyes of white coral and crowns of red-brown volcanic rock.

The statues were carved out of rock from the crater of the extinct volcano Rano Raraku. Over 200 were erected near the island villages. Hundreds more stood or lay in and around the Rano Raraku quarry.

The biggest statue is known as El Gigante. It is 20m long and weighs about 150 tonnes! Experts believe that the figures represented the islanders' important ancestors, who since their death had gained the status of gods.



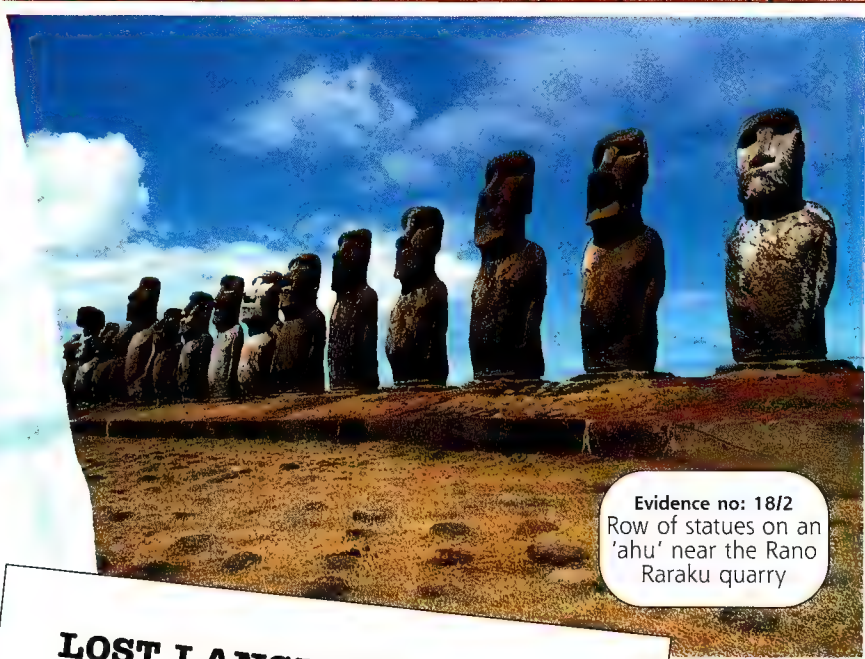
Evidence no: 18/1
Easter Island statue
with red rock crown
and coral eyes

HOW DID THEY DO IT?

Several mysteries surround the Easter Island statues. Perhaps the greatest is how, without the aid of modern machinery, the islanders transported them from the Rano Raraku quarry to 'ahu' many kilometres away.

According to island mythology, the god Make Make ordered the statues to walk to their correct positions. But experts now believe that some were probably transported by sea on rafts.

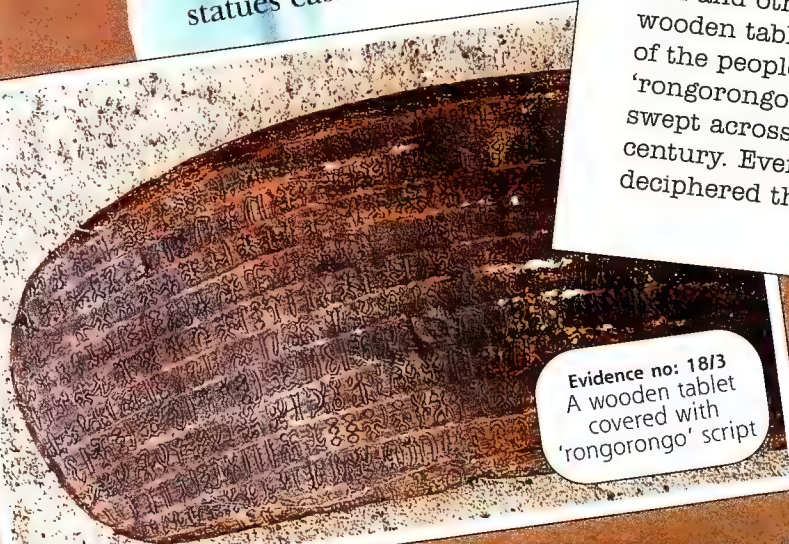
Others may have been pulled overland on wooden rollers or simply dragged across the ground. It is also thought that the islanders smeared the statues with mashed sweet potato to make the statues easier to drag.



Evidence no: 18/2
Row of statues on an 'ahu' near the Rano Raraku quarry

LOST LANGUAGE

There is no evidence that a written language existed on Easter Island until Spanish explorers arrived there in 1770. They asked the local chiefs to sign a document, so the chiefs had to invent a type of writing – fast. It consisted of bird, fish and other symbols, and was cut into wooden tablets with sharks' teeth. Most of the people who understood this 'rongorongo' script died when smallpox swept across the island in the 19th century. Even now, no one has fully deciphered this mysterious language.



Evidence no: 18/3
A wooden tablet covered with 'rongorongo' script

BIRD BELIEFS

As the Easter Island civilisation declined, people lost faith in the power of the great stone statues. But soon a new form of belief developed – the birdman cult. Once a year, chiefs gathered in the village of Orongo, then made their servants swim across shark-infested waters to the nearby islet of Motu Nui. There they competed to find the first egg laid by the sooty terns that nested on the rocks. When the winner arrived back on Easter Island with the egg tucked in his headband, his master became the sacred birdman for a year.



Evidence no: 18/4
Bird carvings on Easter Island, with Motu Nui in the distance

Unexplained

CLASSIC



SERIAL

Chapter 2

The Shadow

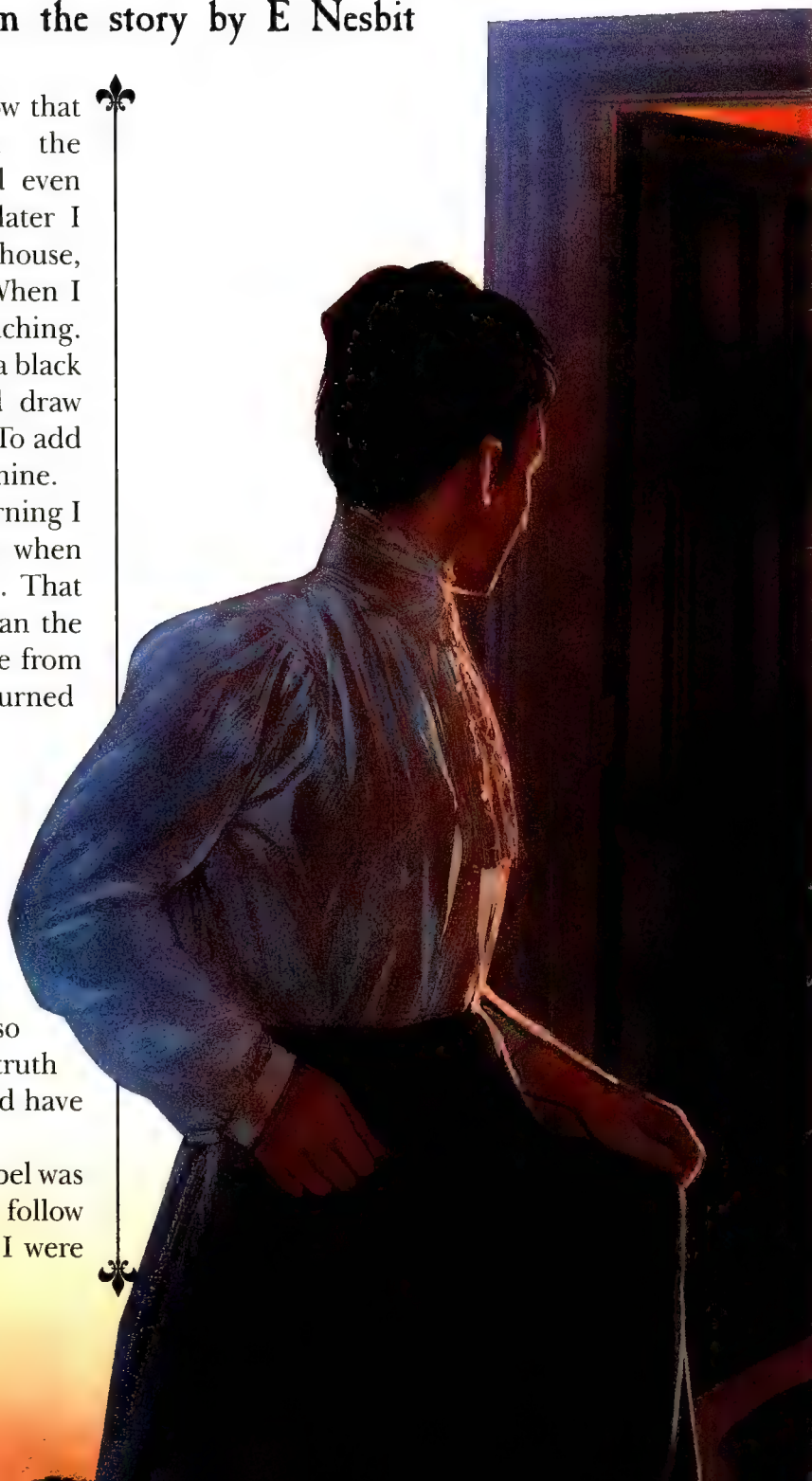
Retold from the story by E Nesbit

“It was of little comfort to know that Edward had also seen the apparition, and soon I had even more reason to worry. A few days later I began to see the figure all round the house, both during the day and at night. When I first spotted it, it was always crouching. Then it would flatten out and lie like a black pool on the floor. Finally, it would draw itself slowly into the nearest shadow. To add to my terror, that shadow was often mine.

Worse was to come. Early one morning I sensed that the shadow was nearby, when suddenly I heard a long, deep sigh. That sound was even more disquieting than the shadowy shape, as it seemed to come from directly behind me. But when I turned round, I could see nothing.

I would have packed my bag and left that day had it not been for one thing. If I had departed, Edward would have had no one to discuss the apparition with, and so would probably have blurted out the truth to Mabel. In her condition, that could have had disastrous consequences.

So I tried to be cheerful when Mabel was around, and Edward did his best to follow my example. But whenever he and I were



alone, we could talk of nothing else but the terrifying dark shadow that seemed to be stalking the house.

The weeks went by, and at last Mabel's baby – a girl – was born. Edward and I were glad to hear the doctors report that both mother and baby were doing well. As we sat in the dining room late

that night, we felt happier than we had done for many weeks. We had not seen or heard the shadow for three days, so instead of talking about its terrifying appearances, we discussed the plans for Edward and Mabel to move to the seaside as soon as she was well enough. I was to oversee the removal of their goods to the new house that Edward had already bought. Edward thanked me profusely for being such a comfort to them both.

Afterwards, I went upstairs with a light step, confident that, for once, nothing was following me. As I passed Mabel's door, I stopped and listened. All was quiet, so I continued to my own room. But just as I was about to open my door, I felt a surge of panic once more and knew that there was something behind me. I turned slowly, clenching my hands to stop them trembling, and there it was, crouching a little further down the corridor. Then it flattened itself, seemed to change into an inky-black liquid and flowed under the door of Mabel's room.

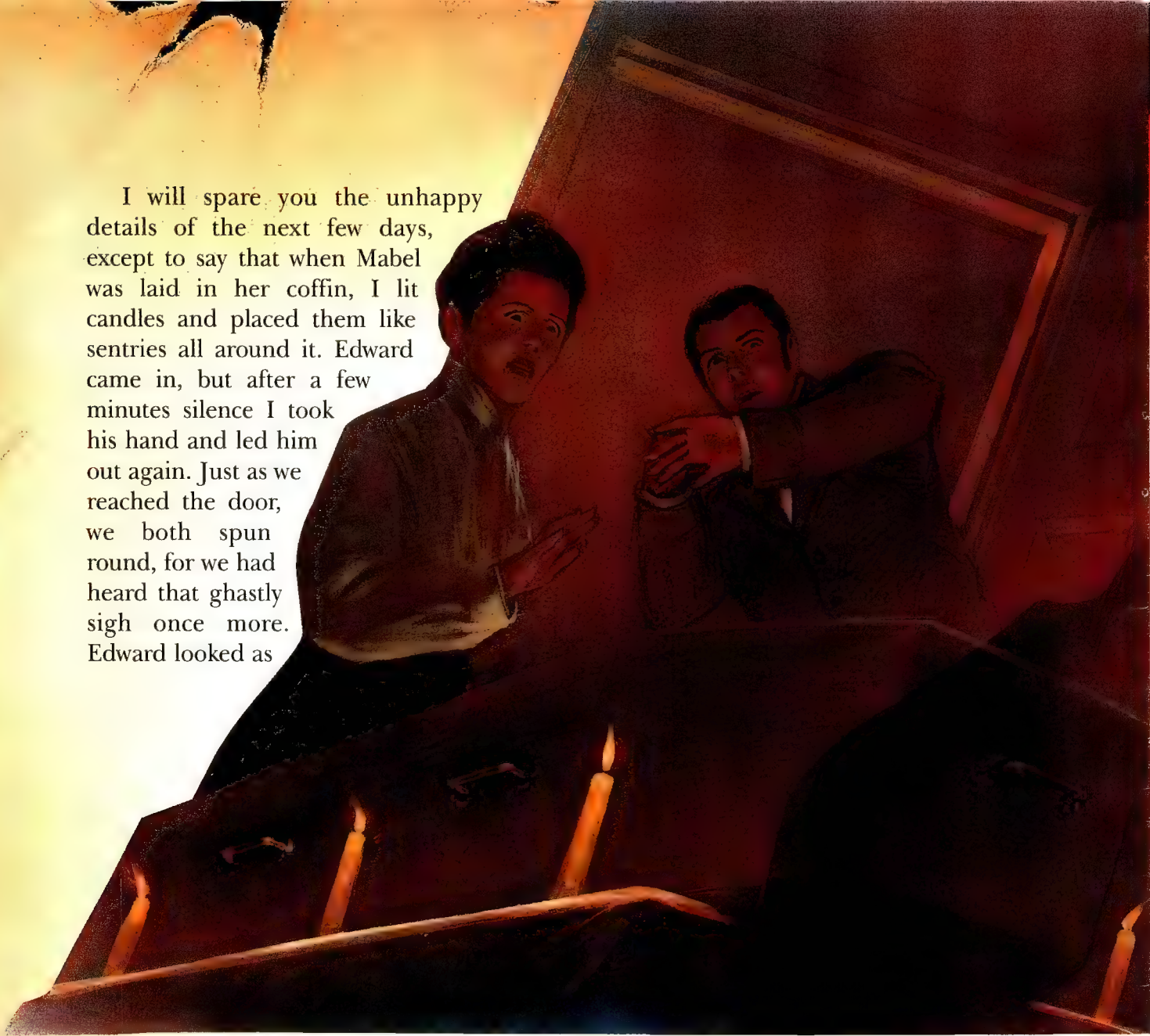
I ran after the apparition and cautiously opened Mabel's door. The new mother was asleep, with the tiny baby curled up in the crook of one of her arms. As I stood there, I prayed silently that Mabel might never know the terrors that Edward and I had encountered, and that the baby would see only pretty sights and hear only pretty sounds.

I returned to my room and slept deeply. But at dawn a howl coming from Mabel's bedroom woke me with a start. When I reached her room, I saw poor Edward clutching the dead body of his wife. I realised with horror that one of my prayers had been answered – but not in the way that I had intended.

Underlined words are explained in WORD POWER.



I will spare you the unhappy details of the next few days, except to say that when Mabel was laid in her coffin, I lit candles and placed them like sentries all around it. Edward came in, but after a few minutes silence I took his hand and led him out again. Just as we reached the door, we both spun round, for we had heard that ghastly sigh once more. Edward looked as



if he were going to run back to his wife's body – perhaps in his confusion he thought the sigh had come from her – when suddenly he froze rigid. There, lurking on the other side of the coffin, was the

crouching shadow. Changing from grey to black, it slowly flattened itself into an inky pool, then slid into the nearest shadow – the shadow of the coffin itself.”

WORD POWER

disquieting – worrying; disturbing

profusely – very much; plentifully

surge – sudden increase

crook – curve; bend

mesmerised – fascinated; hypnotised

Miss Eastwich's voice, which seemed to have become softer and softer as she neared the end of her tale, now stopped. I scanned her face and could see that she had quite forgotten her young audience. Isabella brought her round with one of her typically direct questions. “Did you ever see him again?”

Miss Eastwich replied, “Yes, my dear. But just once. And that time there was

something black crouching between him and me."

"The shadow?" asked Isabella, wide-eyed.

"No, it was his second wife, who was weeping beside his coffin. You see, it was at his funeral that I saw Edward for the last time. It's not a very cheerful story I'm afraid, and it doesn't really lead anywhere. I've never told it to anyone except you ladies. I think it was seeing his daughter this evening that brought it all back."

I watched her eyes wander across to the dressing room door.

"Is she Mabel's baby?" I asked.

"She is, and just like her, too, except for the eyes. She has her father's eyes... ."

Miss Eastwich broke off suddenly, stood bolt upright, clenched her fists and strained to see something by the dressing room door that was not visible to the rest of us. At first her stare was directed at a spot just below the handle, then seemed to drop down to the bottom of the door.

As she looked, her eyes grew wider and wider. Watching her, mesmerised, I suddenly heard a long sigh, which seemed to be coming from right behind me. Terrified, I glanced at Harriet and Isabella, and knew from their pale faces that they, too, had heard the sound.

Miss Eastwich was now making for the dressing room, so I grabbed a candlestick and shakily lit her way. She opened the door and crossed to the girl's bed. By the flickering light of the candle, we could both

see that she was not sleeping. Her eyes were fixed open and she was dead.

The doctor who examined the girl's body the next morning said that Mabel's daughter had died of heart disease, which she had inherited from her mother. But I saw the look of terror in those open eyes, and it seems to me much more likely that she inherited something from her father – the fear of the dark shadow. Miss Eastwich saw that look, too, and I thought her heart would break with sorrow at the sight of the young woman's corpse. But Isabella flung her arms round her new friend and smothered her with affection.

Afterwards, my aunt let Miss Eastwich go so that she could be with her new charge, Isabella. The housekeeper remained in the service of the woman who had treated her so kindly for the rest of her life.

THE END



NEXT ISSUE:

Madam Crowl's Ghost by Joseph Sheridan le Fanu

MONSTER PUZZLES

NY

7:15

TOKYO



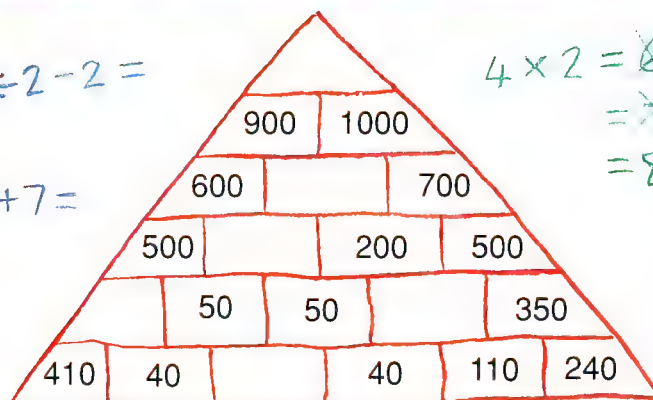
$$15 \div 2 - 2 =$$

$$9 + 7 =$$

$$4 \times 2 = 8$$

$$= 7$$

$$= 8 \checkmark$$



E.A. POE WOZ ERE

TRACING TRASH!

The poltergeist has been trying to trash the classroom! Spot the six things it has thrown, and discover where they come from.

UNRAVELLING DATES

The mummy has forgotten what year he died. Help him remember by filling in the numbers on his drawings of a pyramid. The number at the top is the BC year of his death.

CLOCK THAT!

The vampire is confused about the time – he has been told that all the analogue clocks are five minutes fast, and all the digital clocks are ten minutes slow. Which two clocks can tell him what the right time is?



COAL

GRANITE

CRYSTAL

STONE

2:15

SCHOOL MOTTO

Decode the ghouls' school motto
if you dare!

IED TΣUM GNIVIL EHT
DAED EHT EVIL GNOL

FIENDISH FACTS

In 1960 a poltergeist, or noisy spirit, followed an 11-year-old girl to school. During one lesson it caused a bowl of bulbs the girl had been looking after to move slowly across the teacher's table. But its creepiest trick was to lift heavy desks several centimetres into the air, where they would hover mysteriously before crashing down.

Mmm... my favourite!
Handburgers
followed by
eyes-cream!



MIGH

SPOOKY SOUNDS

It's time for spooky sound practice and the spooks are in a frightful muddle. Can you sort out the sounds for them?

SCROAN

My short beard
was never long

I had several scars
but none on my
left cheek

I wore a patch
over my right eye

I did not lose
my two upper
front teeth

HE'S LOST HIS HEAD

The headless ghost has described his head. The other spooks have drawn pictures of it, but only one has got it right. Which picture is right? Here is his description:

SCOWL

SREAM

HEECH

FOUL FACTS

In 1728, a month after the death of a 14-year-old Dorset schoolboy, 12 pupils at his school saw his ghost sitting on a coffin in an empty classroom. The coroner ordered an investigation into the boy's death. The body was exhumed, and it was discovered that he had, in fact, been strangled!

ANSWERS

TRACING TRASH: Stone from rock collection; green book from shelf; plant from pot; tube of paint from table; rest-tube from rock; marker from board.
UNRAVELLING DATES: The mummy died in 1900 BC.
SCHOOL MOTTO: The Living Must Die!
LONG LIVE THE DEAD
CLOCK THAT: The time is 2.25. The vampire works it out using the digital clock on the bookshelf and the church clock.
HE'S LOST HIS HEAD: B
SPOOKY SOUNDS: Sigh: moon; scream: scream; screech: howl.



THE MEN IN BLACK

Sinister Men In Black (MIB) appear to people who have had UFO encounters. But who sends them and what do they want?

FACT OR FICTION?

There are three main theories about the true nature of Men In Black. Some people believe that they are US government agents whose aim is to silence witnesses so that the public do not learn the disturbing truth about UFOs. The second theory is that MIB are aliens who are trying to find out more about life on Earth. The third is that they exist only in the minds of people with overactive imaginations. Film experts have noted that the clothes, cars and menacing manner of MIB match those of the government agents (G-men) who featured in 1940s crime films. This was the era when the first sightings of MIB occurred.



◀ FILM FOES

In the 1997 film 'Men In Black', the MIB are government agents who track down evil aliens on Earth.

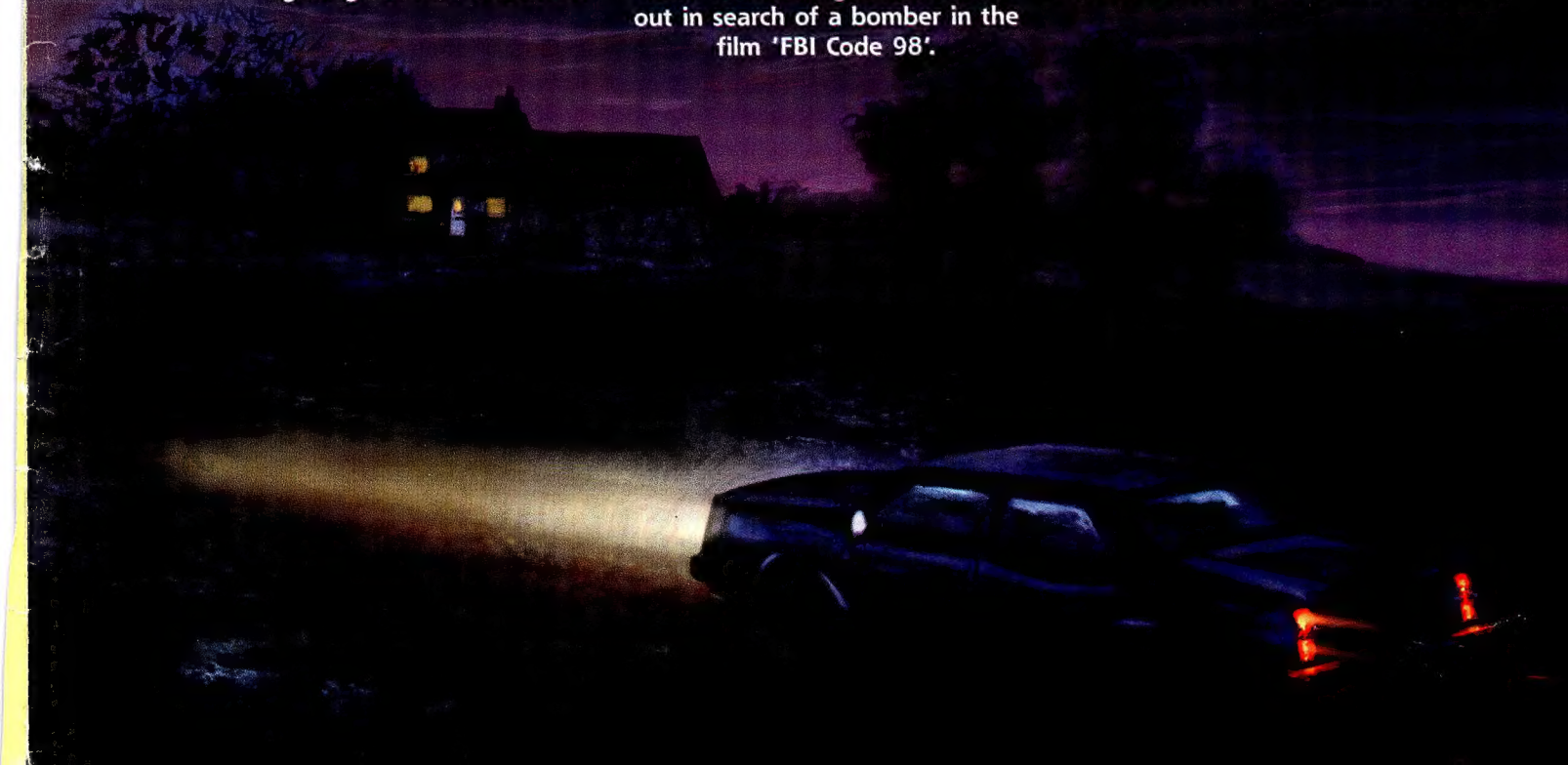
EARLY SIGHTINGS

In 1947, coastguard Harold A Dahl claimed to have seen six UFOs on the west coast of the USA. He also claimed that the next day, a man arrived at his home threatening dire consequences if Dahl told anyone about his experience. This was the first known appearance of an MIB, but more soon followed. The soberly dressed men usually arrived in groups of two or three, driving large, dark cars. They quizzed witnesses about their experiences and hinted at revenge if they told their stories to outsiders. Sometimes UFO experts were similarly threatened.



▲ ROLE MODELS

Four cool-looking G-men stride out in search of a bomber in the film 'FBI Code 98'.



DEATH THREAT

In 1952, a man called Albert K Bender founded the International Flying Saucer Bureau. Shortly afterwards, he appointed Gray Barker as his director of investigations. But a year later, Bender gave up all involvement in UFO study. In 1956, Barker wrote a book called 'They Knew Too Much About Flying Saucers'. In it, he claimed that Bender had abandoned his work because he had received a visit from three MIB. They supposedly arrived at Bender's house after he had written an in-depth 'saucer' study. Communicating telepathically, they told him that he had discovered the truth about UFOs, but that he should not reveal it, on pain of death!



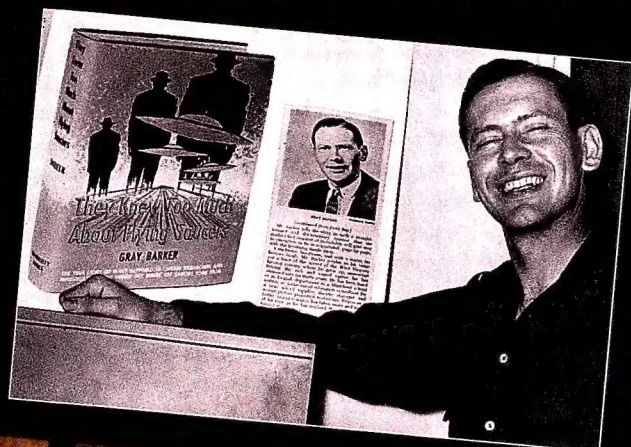
◀ ECCENTRIC EXPERT

Albert K Bender was an eccentric with a great interest in magic as well as UFOs.

THE MAINE MEN

In the mid-1970s, a cluster of MIB appearances took place in Maine, eastern USA. In 1975, two men, David and Paul, claimed to have been abducted by aliens. The next day, they were visited by an MIB. A doctor, Herbert Hopkins, investigated these incidents by hypnotising the two men and taping their accounts.

In September 1976, Hopkins himself was visited by a bald, lipstick-wearing MIB, who insisted that he wipe the tapes. Two weeks later, a man and a woman called on Hopkins' son and daughter-in-law and asked all sorts of weird questions. These visits frightened Hopkins so much that he destroyed all the evidence and stopped work on the case. Since the 1970s, many people have claimed to receive visits from MIB. But despite their threats, these mysterious men have never hurt anyone!



◀ BARKER'S BOOK

Gray Barker proudly displays his book. In it, he revealed the ordeal that Bender suffered at the hands of Men In Black.

